APPROVED

Springfield Prep
CHARTER SCHOOL

Springfield Prep

Minutes

Academic Achievement Committee Meeting

Date and Time
Wednesday February 26, 2025 at 12:30 PM

Location
This meeting is remote and will take place over Zoom.

Committee Members Present
A. Narvaez (remote), S. Fuller (remote)

Committee Members Absent
A. Malone

Guests Present
B. Spirer (remote), Kate Parsons (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

A. Narvaez called a meeting of the Academic Achievement Committee of Springfield Prep to order on Wednesday Feb 26, 2025 at 12:29 PM.
Bill volunteered to lead this meeting and the committee agreed.

C. Approve Prior Meeting Minutes

S. Fuller made a motion to approve the minutes from Academic Achievement Committee Meeting on 12-18-24.
A. Narvaez seconded the motion.

The committee **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

S. Fuller Aye
A. Malone Absent
A. Narvaez Aye

II. Academic Achievement

A. Charter Renewal - 5-year unconditional renewal recommended

- Bill shared that school received an unconditional renewal for five years. He acknowledged the Academic Achievement Committee's work in analyzing student data and conducting thorough board meetings, which is something that DESE reviews as part of the renewal.
- Bill highlighted the importance of compliance areas, mentioning the MTEL compliance issue which other charter schools are also facing. The team is working on this, with regular reminders and coaching for those in need.
- Bill expressed his satisfaction with the report's strength. The MCPSA Chief of Policy and Practice, Erica Brown, complimenting the review as well.
- The next step is for the school, led by Bill and Jess, to draft an updated accountability plan, outlining goals to be reported annually. This will be approved by the department and presented to the board.

B. Winter Interim Assessment Report

- Shawna and Kate presented the winter interim assessment report, highlighting strong culture metrics, full enrollment, high attendance, low discipline rates, and good performance in math. They noted a need for support in early literacy for the 3rd grade cohort.
- Shawna reported that the school's overall attendance was strong, with a 3% lower chronic absence rate than has been typical in the past. The current rates were negatively impacted by illness, particularly the "quademic" affecting many students in Massachusetts this year.
- Shawna also mentioned that the school had an ambitious target from the state of 8.4, with a current rate of 11.4. Bill added that the state's targets were based on prior year data, which could make it harder for the school to meet them despite their strong attendance rates.
- Shawna also highlighted the school's low discipline data, with a suspension rate of 1.1%. She mentioned two students who had been suspended multiple times and were working with their parents and the school counselor to support their success.
- Shawna and Kate discussed the school's performance in interim assessments, specifically focusing on grades 2 through 8. They noted that while math performance was strong, English Language Arts (ELA) performance was below their goals and historical averages.

- Kate explained that the school had ambitious goals for the assessments, which were calculated from the past three years' data plus five points. She also mentioned that the ELA assessment this year was unique due to new test components and texts, making historical comparisons challenging.
- The team acknowledged the need for improvement in ELA and discussed the factors contributing to the current performance, including a new test and particulars of the 4th grade cohort. They shared that they are working on interventions to improve the students' performance by the end of the year.
- Kate, Sally, and Amneris discussed the challenges of comparing performance across different grades and test formats. They acknowledged that changes in test formats and cohorts can make it difficult to determine whether performance improvements are due to student effort or external factors. They also highlighted the importance of teacher training and coaching to address these challenges, acknowledging that while progress is being made, there is still room for improvement.
- Kate emphasized the importance of data for projecting students' performance on MCAS tests. She highlighted the variability in projections due to factors such as unknowns and changes in cut scores, and these projections are based on students' previous test scores. Bill agreed with Kate's points, adding that the projections are helpful for identifying areas that need focus or adjustments, but the accuracy is difficult to guarantee. Sally sought clarification about cut scores, and Kate explained that they are determined based on students' performance in previous years. The team agreed to continue their discussion later and to provide more data at the next meeting.
- Shawna discussed the performance of K-3 students in reading and comprehension. She presented data showing that 69% of their students are at or above grade level, with a significant improvement in decoding and comprehension among their second-grade cohort.
- They also discussed the changes in professional development strategies and the ownership of these strategies by their teachers. The team expressed confidence in their students' foundational reading skills but acknowledged the need to focus on comprehension.
- Bill mentioned that while it is hard to project accurately, a decrease of MCAS performance in ELA and a slight uptick in math as possible.
- Bill will share brief updates on academic trends and teacher retention plans at the upcoming March 6th Board meeting.

III. Closing Items

A. Next Academic Achievement Committee Meeting

The next Academic Achievement Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 16, 2025 at 12:00pm.

B.

Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
B. Spirer

Documents used during the meeting

- SPCS Year 10 Summary of Review 2025 FINAL.pdf
- BESE Feb memo_Charter Renewals Preview_FV.pdf
- Academic & Culture Dashboard for 2.26.25 meeting vf.pdf